



**OFFICIAL MINUTES
RINCON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2021
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
107 W. 17TH STREET
7:00 PM**

Councilmember Present:

Jesse Blackwell, Jr.
Reese Browher
Patrick Kirkland
W. Frederick Long
Levi Scott, Jr.

Councilmember Absent:

Michelle Taylor

Present:

Ken Lee, Mayor
John Klimm, City Manager
Raymond Dickey, City Attorney
Dulcia King, City Clerk
Jonathan Murrell, Police Chief
Pete Smith, Asst. Fire Chief
Jason Stewart, City Planner
Mike Osborne, Recreation Director

he meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. The Invocation was given by Councilmember Kirkland and the Pledge to the Flag was recited.

Roll call: Absent Taylor

Mayor Lee asked everyone to keep Councilmember Taylor in our prayers due to a death in the family. Mayor Lee also acknowledged the Councilmembers that were elected on November 2, new Councilmember Damon Rahn and reelected Councilmembers Ben Blackwell and Levi Scott, Jr.

Approval of the agenda with the following:

Removal of item new business item 3, the petitioner has withdrawn the public hearing.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott
Second: Councilmember Blackwell
Vote by Council: Unanimous

Presentation by Effingham Chamber of Commerce.

Andy Cripps with Chamber was present. Mr. Cripps thanked Council for the opportunity and presented a plaque to Councilmember Long for his years of service on the Chamber's Board.

Public Hearing #1

Turn meeting over to public hearing officer, Raymond Dickey:

Open public hearing: 7:09 PM

Public Hearing on a petition filed by Dana Bonds to rezone 0.64 acre parcel located at 1006 N. Columbia Ave, to amend the zoning from R-4 (Single Family Residential) to GC (General Commercial); the property is owned by Dana Bonds. (Map and Parcel # R2010010)

Attorney Dickey asked was property marked, an ad placed in the paper and the nearby property owners notified. Jason Stewart said yes. Dana Bonds property owner was present. Ms. Bonds said currently the location is residential she has lived there for six years. While there she started online business from the back building, quickly the locals found out about it so she moved to a store front. She has relocated to Pembroke and wants to use the house as an office and use the back building, depending on the City limitations she would like to use as a store front. She does embroidery, screen printing, sells vinyl and blank craft items. Councilmember Long asked about truck traffic turning into her driveway. Ms. Bonds said once or twice a year she has sea shipments, other than that it would be regular UPS traffic. Mr. Stewart said the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval, but he wants Council to keep in mind Ms. Bonds still have to go through the Planning and Development Department for the business.

Close public hearing: 7:14PM

Turn the meeting back over to Mayor Lee.

Vote on the first reading on a petition filed by Dana Bonds to rezone 0.64 acre parcel located at 1006 N. Columbia Ave, to amend the zoning from R-4 (Single Family Residential) to GC (General Commercial); the property is owned by Dana Bonds. (Map and Parcel # R2010010)

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott
Second: Councilmember Long

Mayor Lee said he knows the properties along Highway 21 have gone commercial. Councilmember Kirkland asked were there any close residential properties, Mr. Stewart said yes. Ms. Bonds said two houses down on either side is commercial and one in front of her.

Vote by Council: Unanimous

Public Hearing #2

Turn meeting over to public hearing officer, Raymond Dickey:

Open public hearing: 7:17 PM

Public Hearing on proposed amendment to the City of Rincon Ordinances to add a new definition of “self-storage facility” to Section 90-361 (Definitions) of the Rincon City Code and amend Section 90-176, General Commercial Zoning District (GC) of the Rincon City Code to add “self-storage facility” as a use permitted by Conditional Use Permit in the General Commercial (GC) Zoning District.

Attorney Dickey asked Mr. Stewart was advertisement run in the paper, Mr. Stewart said yes. Attorney Dickey said basically this is a text amendment to our current Ordinance. Mr. Stewart said the current owners want to expand their business but based on the current interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance the zoning there now does not permit self storage. They were attempting to rezone the property Industrial. Through discussion with the owners and staff, we felt it would be appropriate to recommend adding definition of self storage facility as a conditional use to General Commercial; Attorney Dickey said they put it there as a text amendment for Conditional Use, that allows Council to look at individual properties and surrounding properties and place conditional upon those. Conditional Use seems to fit the City's needs. Attorney Dickey said this is already General Commercial.

Close public hearing: 7:32PM

Turn the meeting back over to Mayor Lee.

Vote on proposed amendment to the City of Rincon Ordinances to add a new definition of “self-storage facility” to Section 90-361 (Definitions) of the Rincon City Code and amend Section 90-176, General Commercial Zoning District (GC) of the Rincon City Code to add “self-storage facility” as a use permitted by Conditional Use Permit in the General Commercial (GC) Zoning District.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Browher
Second: Councilmember Long

Councilmember Kirkland said his biggest concern is the look of whatever goes there. This can be addressed in the site plan.

Vote by Council: Unanimous

Old Business:

1. Vote on a petition filed by CS Martin, Inc. requesting a variance on the lot width requirements for 82.42 feet located at 110 Barnwell Ave. The property is owned by Scott Martin of CS Martin, Inc. The property is zoned R-4 (Single Family Residential). (Map and Parcel # R2110003) (Tabled at the 10/11/21 meeting)

Remove from the table: Councilmember Scott
Second: Councilmember Kirkland
Vote by Council: Unanimous

Scott Martin was present. Mr. Martin said he is planning on developing a nine lot subdivision with the existing home it will be ten. All the lots meets the R4 requirements except the one he is requesting the variance on, it meets the square foot requirement but does not meet the width requirement on the front. The houses that he will put there will be a \$300,000 - \$350,000 asset. They will be nice quality homes with hardy board. He needs the variance to complete the subdivision. Mayor Lee said it would be a shame to tear that home down; he commends Mr. Martin for trying to save it. Mr. Martin said he does not want to tear it down. Councilmember Scott said he has looked at the property this weekend, we have had a lot of rain the drainage itself was pretty good.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Scott
Second: Councilmember Blackwell
Vote by Council: Unanimous

New Business:

1. Effingham Herald request approval of a special events permit to host a Hometown Christmas Festival on November 20, 2021 at 1204 N. Columbia Avenue.

Kim Dennis with the Effingham Herald was present. Mrs. Dennis said the Herald has been at their new facility for about three years and their intent was to do events for the community. They have had some events that have been private but this is for the community. There will be have 20 vendors and this will be the kick off to Christmas. Councilmember Blackwell asked would the Herald sponsor this in the future, Mrs. Dennis said she hopes to make it an annual event.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Long
Second: Councilmember Scott

Councilmember Browher asked that the City advertise it on the digital sign.

Vote by Council: Unanimous

2. R. B. Baker Construction request approval of final pay request and retainage in the amount of \$42,290.00 for the 2021 Rincon TSPLOST – Georgia and Savannah Avenues. LI #320.4100.549102

Alec Metzger with EMC was present. He said this is for the final pay request, retainage and start of the one year warranty period. He handed out a score card and submittals and said this company was fairly easy to work with.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Long
Second: Councilmember Blackwell

Councilmember Kirkland appreciates that there were no change orders, but he is struggling with traffic control. We have to figure out a better way to break this down.

Vote by Council: Unanimous

3. Sikes Brothers, Inc request approval of pay request #2 in the amount of \$650,391.56 for the 2021 Rincon TSPLOST – 4th Street and Weisenbaker Road. LI #320.4100.549102

Mr. Metzger said they reviewed quantities and recommend approval. Both roads are paved they will be going through the punch list, final striping and cleaning up. Mayor Lee said it seems like we had more concerns from the citizens on these two streets. Several weeks ago there was an issue with a citizen's mailbox and he was not happy with the attitude of the contractors. They are doing work for the City and he expects them to treat our citizens like we expect our staff to treat them. We need to make sure they are aware of how they are conducting themselves when they talk to our citizens. One of the biggest concerns is the gravel and rocks that were left behind. Mr. Metzger said anytime there is something like that let him know and he will make sure that it is included in the punch list. Councilmember Browher asked about final striping, Mr. Metzger said it could be temporary striping.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Long
Second: Councilmember Scott
Vote by Council: Unanimous

4. Griffin Contracting, Inc. request approval of pay request #1 in the amount of \$103,328.90 for the 2021 Rincon TSPLOST – Middleground Road. LI #320.4100.549102

Mr. Metzger said they have verified quantities and recommend approval. They have pretty much installed the waterlines the whole length of the road but he doesn't think they are connected yet.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Browher
Second: Councilmember Scott
Vote by Council: Unanimous

Mayor Lee asked about the TSPLOST signs, Mr. Metzger said they are installed and he is going to order about 6 more.

5. Second reading of an ordinance to change the annual flat fee amount for insurance companies transacting business within the City limits from \$50.00 to \$75.00.

Mr. Klimm said State law allows cities over 10,000 to charge \$75.00.

Motion to approve: Councilmember Kirkland

Second: Councilmember Long

Vote by Council: Unanimous

6. Administrative Reports:

City Manager – Mr. Klimm recognize City Clerk, Dulcia King and staff for a successful election; we are fortunate at the City level as well as the County level for running a successful elections; he has received comments about the Farmers Market, all but one was favorable. He has reached out to other Cities to see how they dealt with leasing out the space; the proposed budget public hearing is November 22 and December 13 for the second reading with workshops as needed. The good thing is revenues are very strong. The challenge is that health insurance has gone up 12%. The budget that will be presented is titled ‘Rincon Moving Forward’, it doesn’t spend money that we don’t have. Our fiduciary responsible has always been our number one priority. Coming up we have the implementation of the storm water program; the completion of the new Zoning ordinance, which focuses on growth management; we have recognized the approval of SPLOST and we have targeted infrastructure with the new SPLOST money and at the same time we just recognized some movement nationally for the national infrastructure plan; we have to make sure that the City of Rincon is in position so if grand opportunities become available we are ready to go; we need to get into extending our water and sewer lines; Tommy Kee is working with Marcus Sack on the expansion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant; next year we will have the next phase of SPLOST which hopefully will target sidewalk; in public safety we have had some frozen position, next year we can tackle that; Mike Osborne wants to pose a new initiative for more events; there will be a component for Rincon beautification; we need to address the issue of the 7th Street project and work on a way to get that done; Mayor Lee said about the WWTP extension project and when would Tommy Kee and Marcus Sack have a proposed time line, Mr. Klimm said they want to meet with Council and they have a public hearing coming up, he asked would November 29 the day of the public hearing work, Council said yes.

Councilmember Scott asked about Mr. Osborne numbers on basketball, he said they went from 29 to 40.

Councilmember Browner asked about the Christmas Parade. Mr. Klimm said the Noon Lions Club decided to have the parade.

Chief of Police – Chief Murrell said they have done undercover buys at several business and it was as success; they have had two cases with currency seizures; also a seizure of a Mercedes

Benz. Mayor Lee asked about the parade discussion. Chief Murrell said the dilemma with the parade is timing. They sent the permit request to DOT then found out Middleground Road, the detour route, is not worthy of that traffic. The only way they can use a state route is to get it approved by DOT and they have not heard back for the original request yet. They will have to resubmit the application with the new detour route to DOT and hope for approval. His suggestion is not to have the parade. Mayor Lee said he has mentioned using the same route that they used for the 4th of July parade. He thinks they can get it approved in time.

Fire Department - Pete Smith said they have interviews scheduled for the 16th.

Recreation Dept. – Mike Osborne said basketball numbers are up, the housing going up has contributed to the numbers; Mayor Lee asked about scheduling, he said they are not having that much problems so far; Councilmember Scott mentioned having staff to cover these functions it hindering maintenance of the parks, we have to have staff keep everything up. We need to look at his staffing; Mayor Lee asked about the inmates, Mr. Osborne said inmates that he get are always having people drop off contraband, there was discussion on staff and how they are having a rough time rotating and not having enough people to actively supervise the inmates; Mr. Osborne said they are wrapping up football and soccer; he has talked to someone about bringing ice skating to Rincon. They will have insurance and give us a percentage of what they make. They want to open Thanksgiving Day; Councilmember Browher asked how many employees he has and said he would like to piggy back on what Councilmember Scott said and would like to look at the structure of Mr. Osborne’s department.

Mayor and Council – Councilmember Scott asked about a joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Board maybe in January or February.

Adjourn:

Motion: Councilmember Scott

Second: Councilmember Kirkland

Vote by Council: Unanimous